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CF Rideau Centre will remain closed as 'Freedom Convoy' protest continues in downtown Ottawa

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The CF Rideau Centre will stay closed until further notice due to the ongoing protests in downtown Ottawa, its owners said Sunday afternoon.

Cadillac Fairview said in a statement that authorities "cannot provide any assurances that it is safe" to open the mall and its 175 businesses amid the "Freedom Convoy" protest against COVID-19 mandates.

The popular mall in downtown Ottawa has been closed since Jan. 29, when dozens of unmasked shoppers packed the mall during the opening days of the demonstration. Several trucks and other vehicles remain parked at the intersection of Rideau Street and Sussex Drive.

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In a statement Sunday afternoon, Cadillac Fairview said it has had ongoing engagement with police and city officials since the start of the demonstration.

"Cadillac Fairview has been advised that authorities cannot provide any assurances that it is safe to reopen or that the police service would be able to assist our security personnel in maintaining public order and safety within and around CF Rideau Centre," said Cadillac Fairview.

"As a result, CF Rideau Centre remains closed and conditions for reopening will be evaluated on a daily basis in collaboration with our community partners."

Mayor Jim Watson declared a [state of emergency](#) on Sunday due to the ongoing demonstrations in downtown Ottawa.

The Retail Council of Canada estimated the initial seven-day closure of the Rideau Centre last week cost the mall and its retailers \$19.7 million in lost revenue.

Cadillac Fairview calls the situation in downtown Ottawa "untenable", and calls on all levels of government to work together to find a solution.

"While our shared primary concern remains public safety and the safety of those that work within CF Rideau Centre, we are increasingly concerned about the economic impact and financial burden for the thousands of employees and 175 businesses that call CF Rideau Centre home," said Cadillac Fairview.

"The continued closure of an important community space, the loss of employment income, and the financial impact on our clients is heart-breaking given all of our shared pain and sacrifice

during the pandemic."

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Barricades up outside the Rideau Centre in downtown Ottawa. (Jackie Perez/CTV News Ottawa)

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